

Community Planning Session Conference

Held on December 19, 2005

The Community Planning Session Conference dated December 19, 2005 began at 9:00 a.m. at the Red Lion Inn, Butte, Montana.

AGENDA

9:00 a.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Rules and Responsibilities

9:15 a.m. Group Discussions

(1)Community Weaknesses (Fears)

(2)Community Strengths (Gains)

10:15 a.m. Break

10:30 a.m. Next Steps:

Action Plan

Implementation

11:45 a.m. Closing Remarks (Where do we go from here?)

Marko Lucich began the conference with introductions and the purpose of this conference.

Paul Babb set the stage of the meeting by inviting a variety of people of varying backgrounds such as legislature, council, contractors, and general public. This meeting is not intended to portray the government, Chamber of Commerce, or local business development entities. Mr. Lucich kicked off the meeting by asking the audience for a list of hopes and fears and then to break up into groups for discussions. The goal is to see where we want to be within this community. This is the first of many meetings to take place. Let get everything out on the table regarding issues for Butte and create a forum to enable us to work on this together as a whole community with a positive outlook and attitude.

Mr. Lucich asked the audience to express their fears and hopes to enable this community to move forward. There are no right or wrong answers and this is just the beginning of a brainstorming session. We need to create an action plan now and expand it onto the next year by putting our best foot forward. Getting everyone's point of view from different perspectives will create a sense of guidance and a healthy process first off by showing respect to one another. We want to keep this in a positive manner by observing what role this community is currently talking, the future marketing

devices that need to be instilled, and how to get as many of the 34,000 people in this community to work together in one direction.

Lets begin with the HOPES of this community:

1. Create new housing and increase it's availability.
2. Specify definitive small independent businesses in the uptown district.
3. Expand transportation systems to include the East Ridge and surrounding outer edges of Butte.
4. Create a 'family friendly' place for young couples to go and meet others such as parks and walking trails.
5. Entice new businesses to Butte such as manufacturing. The goal is to keep our children to stay in Butte to raise their families and prevent them from having to travel out of town or state to have better business opportunities.
6. Expansion of specific businesses including mining and distribution.
7. Expand retail opportunities to include not just the local Butte area but also the whole Southwestern Montana division.
8. Coordinating efforts together in brining more fundraising efforts into Butte. Bring groups together as one instead of having a number of projects contenting with one another.
9. Continue to expand efforts for beautification of the community.
10. Make Butte more of a destination area.
11. Create a more aggressive relationship between Montana Tech and Butte Silver Bow as a community as a whole.
12. Downsize the Butte Historic section in old uptown Butte to include a smaller area enabling a more definite destination to showcase.
13. Strengthen Butte's cultural assets including the art foundation, public library, and Mother Lode Theatre.
14. Save the Lady of the Rockies from possible forest fires due to the beetle infestation That has destroyed hundreds of acres of pine trees creating too much fuel for fires in general.
15. Create a fast track infrastructure for growth to include water, septic, and basic improvements to transportation.
16. Prepare for future growth by developing a marketing process to include all of Butte's primary areas such as Montana Tech.

“LET US FIGHT FOR THINGS TOGETHER AND NOT AGAINST EACH OTHER”.

17. Inspire the youth of Butte by creating nice playgrounds and parks.
18. Development of a stronger up-to-date hospital and medical community by creating more stability with existing services that we have knowledge of with an advanced medical community.
19. Create good solid school systems.
20. Apply for more grants by having a knowledge and trained grant writer perform the duties and have the ability to obtain the necessary funding for future endeavors.
21. Educate and develop quality education creating a higher mil levy; increase quality education by supporting our schools.

22. Expansion of the location of Butte as being a crossroads between I-15 and I-90; an injunction that serves three major highways enabling everyone traveling in any one direction to come through Butte.
23. Create limited resources and have a general theme prioritizing efforts as what Butte should embark on by applying resources to several organizations and having a common vision.
24. Expand on Butte's tourism and its destination.
25. Create a strong job base to keep businesses here in Butte to stay and to entice others from out of state to want to come in
26. Market Butte as a whole town, not as a metropolitan area via aggressive marketing excluding huge bright colored billboards. Review what other counties are doing. Don't stress on mining as the entity but other positive feedback ideas that Butte has to offer to one and all and not just one entity such as Montana's open spaces and outdoor recreations to include skiing fly fishing, and hunting.
27. Unified and specific marketing.
28. Creating a safe community by reducing crime.
29. Supporting a more heavy industry such as steel companies creating good paying jobs and at the same time embarking on necessary standards and needs within our community.

Now let's express the FEARS into development and growth of this community.

1. Uncontrolled growth in the future.
2. Lack of adequate housing.
3. Too much environmental interference.
4. Future deterioration of neighborhoods especially due to lack of gainful employment.
5. Current status of Air Line service.
6. In-fighting or lack of direction.
7. Retaining existing business within Butte to stay for future availability.
8. Make our economy stronger.
9. Loss of culture heritage and identity.
10. Lack of minimum wage, equal employment, living wage.
11. Allowing outsiders to dictate our direction and what is best for our future endeavors.
12. Road blocks inhibiting progress.
13. Change priorities.
14. Expanding educational needs.
15. Lack of business plan and willingness to explain.
16. Lack of enough land to spread out for development; cost of property and affordability of building and construction.
17. Lack of community involvement; people moving in one direction with same interests; lack of unity.
18. Outsiders negative attitude and poor information
19. Deception of our community faces reality.
20. Media's negative advertising and printing/reporting.
21. Lack of support for educational
22. Serious lack of support for teachers and coaches and school personnel.
23. Decreased retail and existing businesses; poor retail marketing growth.

24. Lack of small manufacturing plants within the community such as Silver Smithing and Woodcarving.
25. Lack of different levels of employment to all ages of our community.
26. Negative promotion of Butte as a 'friendly environment/community' and the negativity regarding the ugly scars visually seen such as the pit and mining roads with mounds of mining topsoil dirt.
27. Poor promotion of the perception of the Berkley Pit and lack of understanding Butte's mining history.
28. Poor school curriculum causing lack of current educational needs. This includes all levels of education from Kindergarten to College.
29. Unstable industrial base.
30. Problems with current Power company / center unwilling to assist local residences and businesses.
31. Lack of a complete business plan.
32. Poor marketing of Butte's current assets.

The audience was asked to separate into three equal groups, utilizing those individuals with strengths to participate at different tables to assist in balancing the strengths and weaknesses of all involved. A group leader will be designated and a list of priorities created. After a brief session, the audience will convene to express their group's list.

List of PRIORITIES per group leader.

(Josh's group)

1. Create a community beautification effort by making Butte attractive with corridor improvements, expansion of commercialism, attract new businesses, promote the community on selling Butte to families and businesses;
2. Create an unified government plan or effort by accepting public input and creating a Butte business plan by addressing marketing issues; creating easier way for those within the community to get involved; develop a vision and build to the highest levels on it; create more avenues to accept more manufacturing; and decide where we as a community stand on government issues.
3. Apply for more funding at all levels of government; strengthen public and private partnerships; strengthen housing and businesses utilizing existing funding programs such as URA; create new resources; increase funding for school systems kindergarten thru 12 including Montana College of Technology; get people involved and work as one, rather than fighting and blaming others for one's responsibility.

(Jim Smitham's group)

1. Create a strong business plan concept within the private sector encompassing city-wide elements within the community; apply for federal and state grants; eliminate and reduce in fragmentation; hold another meeting with high school and college students; reduce negative and poor attitudes; create a good marketing plan; identify possible industries; strengthen retail/industrial/commercial outputs.

(Ron's group)

1. Create a business plan and get the community involved; support and market an infrastructure plan; strengthen communication; bring the community together; promote tourism; obtain support from other community members.

Mr. Lucich stated that plans for a thorough transportation system with strong policies are a priority with each group. To educate all members of the community and utilize community leaders needs to be assessed. Housing concerns, business plan, and marketing are three priorities from each group.

Mr. Babb stated that the first step is to get those who would like to volunteer on creating a business plan. He requested that John Donovan (who works with Headwaters) and Jason Kovnesky talk about the strengths and weaknesses of finances. Ask others experienced in financial, capital, and private resources to assist with the creation of a business plan. Get information from committee members and other departmental heads and engage those within the local government. Pulling all resources and taking the information and desires and needs of the community with the local government and Chamber of Commerce can create a strong plan. The goal from this meeting is to create a plan to include transportation and engage as many different groups involved. Also broaden out into having neighborhood meetings and bring their information to one head meeting. By pulling all government resources, the local development group, Chamber of Commerce, and the community into one sector, as a strong group we will be able to produce a strong and desirable plan that everyone can work on and towards the goals.

Butte wants a business plan that must come from the general public and not from the government. The people of this community want to have the say as to what needs to be done and the initiative to be completed and not told by a governmental group as to what they will or won't be able to do. Mr. Babb expressed that this committee is not about the Courthouse government or Chamber of Commerce. Politics must not enter the decision-making and one person cannot make the decision for another. We must unite as one, to talk about all issues at hand, and create a sense of community goals and visions. Things can happen. The first step is to create an outline that others can build one on issue at a time.

Citizens interesting in helping with the Community Business Plan were: Bill Brandon, Mark Dahl, John Donovan, Brenda Dorvall, John Eyde, Brian Holland, James Kiser, Jason Kovnesky, Chris Rosa, Gary Simonich, and Scott Thompson.

In regards to Community Beautification, people want to have a clean and safe place for their family and themselves. Dan Dennehy, who is the Health Officer for the Health Department, carries out Beautify Butte month, Community Enrichment Committee, and Community Decay Committee, in which every Department Head comes to meetings with projects that must be addressed and completed. Priorities are listed and completed. Minutes of each meeting are posted. Everyone can monitor the amount of work that is completed. First priority will be to get an outline of the business plan for the community and allow as many participants to work with the group.

Timeframe: a draft of a business plan must be completed as soon as possible, hopefully within 3 months time. Then its implementation stage no later than within 6 months.

Another study group regarding planning and transportation is another factor to consider. All minutes will be e-mailed with all information and placed on the Butte-Silver Bow's website for everyone to review.

The next meeting for this group should take place within a short period of time to get movement forward. The announcement for time and place will be upcoming in the very near future. Everyone is invited to bring someone along with him or her so more input can be obtained.

Thanks to all of those who attended. This is just the beginning, the first step into a great committee.

Reporting of the minutes of each group and posting will be available for everyone to review and keep up to date with the on goings of this committee.

Belinda "B" Fargher, Transcriptionist